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TO: IMMEDIATE WHITE HOUSE//SITUATION ROOM FOR MR MCMANIS.

ITEM NO: WH-9   DATE: 2 APRIL 1974

SUBJECT: COMMENT ON NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE--DAYAN SAYS SOVIET

JETS IN SYRIA MAY BE MIG-23'S

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DREW MIDDLETON REPORTS IN THE APRIL 2 NEW YORK TIMES THAT

SYRIA IS RECEIVING MIG-23 FLOGGER FIGHTER-BOMBERS FROM THE SOVIET

UNION. ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, DEFENSE MINISTER MOSHE DAYAN

CITED ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE AS THE SOURCE OF REPORTS THAT TWO

SOVIET MERCHANT SHIPS WERE DELIVERING THE AIRCRAFT.

THERE IS NO EVIDENCE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME TO CONFIRM THE

ISRAELI REPORT.

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IN THE SAME ARTICLE, DEFENSE MINISTER DAYAN IS QUOTED AS
SAYING THERE ARE 3,000 CUBAN MILITARY PERSONNEL IN AN ARMORED
BRIGADE NOW STATIONED IN SYRIA.

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WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE

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AS TO HOW MANY ARE IN THE COUNTRY.

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SOME PROBABLY ARE SERVING AS INSTRUCTORS AND OTHERS MAY
BE INTEGRATED INTO THE AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM. A SMALL CUBAN MEDICAL
UNIT ALSO IS IN THE COUNTRY.

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